

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 KUALA 01056 151503 Z

53

ACTION SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 INR-09 IO-12 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 OST-04 RSC-01 GAC-01 AEC-11 PA-03

PRS-01 USIA-12 OMB-01 RSR-01 /106 W  
----- 062021

R 150901 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3797

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KUALA LUMPUR 1056

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: TECH, ENRG, MY

SUBJECT: MALAYSIAN INTEREST IN USE OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES

REF: STATE 046278

1. FEAR POSSIBLY AWKWARD SITUATION MAY ARISE WHEN GOM RECEIVES RESPONSE REPORTED REFTEL TO THEIR REQUEST FOR USAEC ASSISTANCE IN CONSTRUCTING HARBOR IN SARAWAK WITH USE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY.
  2. EVEN PRIOR TO DR. EDWARD TELLER'S VISIT TO THIS COUNTRY, IT WAS WIDELY REPORTED IN THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS THAT ONE OF HIS MAJOR OBJECTIVES WAS TO DISCUSS WITH THAI OFFICIALS THE PROSPECTS OF UTILIZING NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CANAL ACROSS THE KRA ISTHMUS. WHILE TELLER'S PRESENTATIONS HERE, ALL HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL, DEALT WITH THE GENERAL PROSPECTS OF THE UTILIZATION OF NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR PEACEFUL USES, IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS WITH TOP OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THE MINISTER OF RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY, HE WAS ASKED, AND DWELT AT LENGTH ON THE USE OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES FOR MAJOR EXCAVATION SUCH AS HARBOR CONSTRUCTION. HE INFORMED THE MINSTER THAT THE LIVERMORE LABORATORY, WITH WHICH HE IS ASSOCIATED, WAS EAGER TO FIND A LIKELY PROJECT FOR NUCLEAR HARBOR CONSTRUCTION SINCE THIS WOULD FACILITATE PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE OF THE UTILIZATION OF NUCLEAR
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PAGE 02 KUALA 01056 151503 Z

POWER FOR PEACEFUL USES. TELLER GAVE NO INDICATION THAT NUCLEAR EXCAVATION WOULD LIKELY BE IN CONFLICT WITH THE TEST BAN TREATY OR THAT THE USAEC HAD SUSPENDED FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF EXCAVATION TECHNOLOGY.

3. REGRET THAT WE WERE NOT INFORMED OF USAEC' S VIEWS ON THIS IMPORTANT MATTER SO THAT WE MIGHT HAVE RESTRAINED THE ENTHUSIASM OF THE MINISTER FOR WHAT APPEARED TO BE A PROMISING TECHNIQUE FOR THE CREATION OF A DEEP WATER HARBOR IN HIS NATIVE CITY OF KUCHING, SARAWAK, A PROJECT THAT HAS LONG BEEN CONSIDERED UNECONOMICAL IF PURSUED THROUGH TRADITIONAL ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY.

4. WE WERE UNAWARE THAT THE DIRECTOR OF NISIR HAD ADDRESSED THE AEC ON THIS MATTER BUT I EXPECT THAT THE EMBASSY WILL BE APPROACHED TO COMMENT ON THE REPLY RECEIVED FROM AEC.

5. WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE WHETHER PROJECT AS DESCRIBED BY TELLER IS AT ALL FEASIBLE. WHETHER LIVERMORE LABORATORY SHOULD BE APPROACHED FOR TECHNICAL ADVICE OR WHEHTER WE ARE TO INFORM THE MINISTER THAT THE PROJECT IS NOT FEASIBLE AND SHOULD BE DROPPED.

6. FINALLY, DEPARTMENT WILL APPRECIATE IMPORTANCE OF EXPRESSING CONSISTENT POSITION ON MATTERS SUCH AS THIS, PARTICULARLY WITHIN SEA REGION. IN THIS REGARD, STATE 126610 OF JULY 13, 1972 ON KRA ISTHMUS PROJECT APPEARS REFLECT MORE FLEXIBLE POSITION THAN THAT OF REFTTEL.  
LYDMAN

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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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